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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/820,688	03/30/2001	Koji Naito	018987-032	8787
7590	11/15/2004		EXAMINER	
Platon N. Mandros BURNS, DOANE, SWECKER & MATHIS, L.L.P. P.O. Box 1404 Alexandria, VA 22313-1404			THOMPSON, JAMES A	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2624	

DATE MAILED: 11/15/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/820,688

Applicant(s)

NAITO ET AL.

Examiner

James A Thompson

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 March 2001.
2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 30 March 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

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DETAILED ACTION

Priority

1. Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Claim Grouping

2. The apparatus of claim 1 is embodied in the apparatus of claim 7. Claim 7 performs the method specifically recited in claim 13 and the further limitation of said method specifically recited in claim 19. Further, claim 7 executes the steps of the computer program recited in claim 20. Claims 1, 7, 13, 19 and 20 are discussed together.

The apparatus of claim 26 is embodied in the apparatus of claim 1. The method of claim 27 is embodied in the method of claim 13. The program of claim 28 is embodied in the program of claim 20. Claims 26-28 are therefore discussed together with claims 1, 7, 13, 19 and 20.

Claims 2-6 recite the same limitations as claim 8-12, respectively. Claims 8-12 perform the methods disclosed in claims 14-18, respectively. Claims 8-12 perform the steps of the computer program disclosed in claims 21-25, respectively. Claims 2-6, claims 8-12, claims 14-18, and claim 21-25 are therefore respectively discussed together.

Claim Objections

3. Claim 8 is objected to because of the following informalities:

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On line 7, "unit, and" should be changed to "unit, wherein" since the proceeding limitation limits the function of a unit that has already been disclosed and does not recite an additional unit which is comprised in the image forming apparatus. This is also consistent with the language of claim 2, lines 6-7. Further, Examiner suggests altering a portion of claim 8, line 12. Specifically, "the location being sent" should be modified to "the location information being sent" both for the sake of clarity and for the sake of being consistent with the language of claim 2.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

4. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

5. Claims 20-25 and 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 20-25 and 28 recite, either explicitly or due to claim dependency, "[a] program that is executed by a computer". A program must be embodied in some fashion in order to be able to function. Claims 20-25 and 28 do not recite how said program is physically embodied, which would thus allow said program to be executed by a computer and thus perform the recited functions.

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Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

6. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless -
(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

7. Claims 1-3, 5-9, 11-15, 17-22, and 24-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Ikenoue (US Patent 5,987,127).

Regarding claims 1, 7, 13, 19, 20, 26, 27 and 28: Ikenoue discloses an image forming apparatus (figure 1 of Ikenoue) equipped with an image processing apparatus (figure 1(100); figure 13; and column 9, lines 26-28 of Ikenoue) that processed inputted first image data (column 5, lines 46-48 of Ikenoue) so as to output second image data (column 5, lines 42-46 of Ikenoue), the image forming apparatus forming an image according to the second image data (column 5, lines 49-54 of Ikenoue). The image processing apparatus (figure 13 of Ikenoue) comprises a detecting unit (figure 24(131(portion)) and column 4, lines 23-24 of Ikenoue) that detects all pieces of additional information that are embedded in the first image data (column 9, lines 51-53 of Ikenoue); an analyzing unit (figure 24(131(portion)) of Ikenoue) that analyzes the detected pieces of additional information (column 12, lines 56-61 of Ikenoue) and judges whether any of the detected pieces of additional information includes predetermined information (column 13, lines 45-50 of Ikenoue) that is updateable (column 14, lines 31-36 of Ikenoue). The detection and analysis of additional information is performed by a processor (figure 24(131) and column 13, lines

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4-19 of Ikenoue). The detecting unit and the analyzing unit are the corresponding portions of said processor, along with the associated embodied software and memory, that perform the functions of the detecting unit and analyzing unit.

Said image processing apparatus further comprises an embedding unit (figure 13(18) of Ikenoue) that (1) updates, when a judgment result of the analyzing unit is affirmative, the predetermined information included in the piece of additional information (column 16; lines 8-10, lines 21-22, and lines 25-28 of Ikenoue), and embeds the updated predetermined information into the first image data at a location where the predetermined information is originally embedded (figure 4 and column 16, lines 1-9 of Ikenoue). The generation code and copy number, along with the apparatus code (column 16, lines 25-28 of Ikenoue), are simply updated (column 16, lines 1-9 of Ikenoue) using the predetermined additional data format (figure 4 of Ikenoue). Therefore, said updated additional data will simply be at the same location as the additional data was before updating. Further, said embedding unit (2) embeds, when the judgment result of the analyzing unit is negative, a new piece of additional information (column 16, lines 1-7 of Ikenoue) including updated information into the first image data (column 16, lines 1-9 and lines 25-28 of Ikenoue), the updated information being equivalent to the predetermined information (column 16, lines 3-9 and lines 25-28 of Ikenoue), wherein the first image data embedded with the updated predetermined information and/or the new piece of additional information is outputted as the second image data (column 14, lines 31-37 of Ikenoue). A specific format (figure 4 of Ikenoue) is used for embedding each particular type of data, said format further

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being divided into specific blocks for processing (column 7, lines 35-43 of Ikenoue). Therefore, the new piece of additional information is embedded at a location that does not overlap locations where the detected pieces of additional information are embedded (figure 4 and column 7, lines 35-43 of Ikenoue). The generation number, copy number, and apparatus recognition code are always in the same format (figure 4 of Ikenoue) whether said generation number, copy number, and apparatus recognition code are newly placed in the document or are simply updated (column 16, lines 3-9 and lines 25-28 of Ikenoue).

Regarding claims 2, 8, 14 and 21: Ikenoue discloses that said image processing apparatus further comprises an extracting unit (figure 24(131)(portion)) of Ikenoue) that extracts the detected pieces of additional information from the first image data (column 13, lines 11-13 of Ikenoue). The extracting unit is the portion of the image analysis processor (figure 24(131) of Ikenoue), along with the associated embodied software and memory that performs the functions of said extracting unit. Since said analyzing unit is a portion of the image analysis processor, and the next step is the analysis of the extracted additional information (figure 25(s1306) and column 13, lines 14-16 of Ikenoue), then said extracting unit sends the extracted pieces of additional information to the analyzing unit. Further, the embedding unit embeds each of the detected pieces of additional information and the new piece of additional information by referring to location information (column 16, lines 39-44 of Ikenoue) showing a location of each of the extracted pieces of additional information (figure 4 and column 16, line 67 to column 17, line 7 of Ikenoue). Since the block number, and therefore the relative location, is rearranged and

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determined by the extracting unit (column 14, lines 4-8 of Ikenoue), the location (predetermined dot number added with a block number) (column 16, lines 41-44 of Ikenoue) is sent by the extracting unit.

Regarding claims 3, 9, 15 and 22: Ikenoue discloses that when the analyzing unit analyzes the detected pieces of additional information, the analyzing unit employs a predetermined embedding format used by the embedding unit (figure 4; and column 7, lines 36-49 of Ikenoue). The additional data is embedded using a predetermined format (figure 4 and column 7, lines 36-38 of Ikenoue) which can also be split into blocks of data of a predetermined size and arranged in a predetermined fashion (column 7, lines 39-45 of Ikenoue). The additional data is recovered using the same predetermined format (column 7, lines 45-49 of Ikenoue).

Regarding claims 5, 11, 17 and 24: Ikenoue discloses that, when the analyzing unit finds that any of the detected pieces of additional information is unanalyzable (column 13, lines 60-66 of Ikenoue), the analyzing unit judges that the piece of additional information does not include the predetermined information (column 14, lines 4-8 of Ikenoue). Blocks of additional data are analyzed to determine whether or not said blocks of additional data are invalid (column 13, lines 60-66 of Ikenoue). If said block of additional data are invalid, but said invalidity is not due to forgery, said invalid blocks are deleted (column 14, lines 4-8 of Ikenoue). Thus, said invalid blocks clearly do not have said predetermined information.

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Regarding claims 6, 12, 18 and 25: Ikenoue discloses that the predetermined information includes information about a date when the image data is processed (column 16, lines 21-22 and lines 33-34 of Ikenoue).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

8. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

9. Claims 4, 10, 16 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ikenoue (US Patent 5,987,127) in view of Davis (US Patent 3,760,159).

Regarding claims 4, 10, 16 and 23: Ikenoue discloses a warning unit (figure 13(20) of Ikenoue) that issues, when the additional data is determined to be secret (column 19, lines 60-65 of Ikenoue) and the proper confirmation data is not entered (column 20, lines 3-4 of Ikenoue), a warning to the effect that the copying of the document would be illegal (column 20, lines 5-9 of Ikenoue).

Ikenoue further discloses using the analyzing unit to find if any of the detected pieces of additional information are unanalyzable (column 13, lines 60-66 of Ikenoue).

Ikenoue does not disclose expressly that said warning unit issues, when the analyzing unit finds that any of the detected

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pieces of additional data is unanalyzable, a warning to the effect that the piece of additional information is unanalyzable.

Davis discloses issuing a warning to the effect that a valid parity does not exist (column 6, lines 16-20 of Davis) in the digital input data (column 5, lines 64-68 of Davis).

Ikenoue and Davis are combinable because they are from similar problem solving areas, namely the verification of digital information. At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to display a warning if the digital data cannot be read properly, as taught by Davis, and is therefore unanalyzable, as taught by Ikenoue. The motivation for doing so would have been to give the operator a visual notification that an error has occurred (column 6, lines 19-20 of Davis). Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Davis with Ikenoue to obtain the invention as specified in claims 4, 10, 16 and 23.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to James A Thompson whose telephone number is 703-305-6329. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30AM-5:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David K Moore can be reached on 703-308-7452. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

James A. Thompson
Examiner
Art Unit 2624

JAT
9 November 2004



THOMAS D.
~~LEE~~ LEE
PRIMARY EXAMINER